THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India's response to abnormal situation prevailing in South Africa is well known. In accordance with our consistent policy and various resolutions adopted by the United Nations, we have imposed a total boycott of economic and commercial relations with South Africa. In fact, India does not have any other kind of relations with the racist regime in Pretoria.

Assessment of Naval Presence of Big Powers in the Indian Ocean

298. SHRI RAMCHANDRA BHARADWAJ : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what is Government's latest assessment of the naval presence of various big powers in the Indian Ocean, as in April, 1986 and how it compares with that a year back;

(b) whether there has been a sizeable increase therein; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto in the context of the proposal to keep Indian Ocean as a zone of peace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) There has been an increase of about 15% in the presence of ships of various big powers in the Indian Ocean, as between April 1985 and end of March 1986.

(c) The Government of India have consistently sought to reduce the presence of outside military forces in the Indian Ocean area. India has been in the forefront of the move to declare the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We have been pressing for the implementation of U.N. Resolution No. 2832 (XXVI) of 1971 which *inter alia* calls for the holding of a Conference with a view to transforming the Indian Ocean into Zone of Peace, from which great power military presence and rivalry would be eliminated. India is disappointed at the repeated postponements of this Conference.

Enquiry into the missing of papers of Civil Services Examination, 1985

299. SHRI RAMCHANDRA BHARADWAJ : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that about 100 candidates who appeared for the Civil Services Examination for 1985, conducted by the UPSC, have been called upon to reappear in one of the papers, since the packet containing the answer books on General Knowledge of these candidates had been misplaced; and

(b) if so, whether an inquiry has been caused to fix the responsibility and if so, the findings thereof and the action taken in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) The Union Public Service Commission has decided to hold a re-examination for 94 candidates in General Studies Paper-II of the main examination of Civil Services Examination, 1985 as their answer books were lost in postal transit.

(b) As the scripts were lost in postal transit, the matter has been brought to the notice of the postal authorities by the Union Public Service Commission. The Postal Department has also been requested to consider making special arrangements for the movement of examination scripts so that incidents of this type do not recur in future.